

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 799

By Pitts

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Tim Hall on his exemplary service as President of Austin Peay State University.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly wishes to honor Austin Peay State University (APSU) President Tim Hall upon his nearly seven-year tenure there, which marked a period of tremendous growth and national prominence for the University due to his bold and visionary leadership; and

WHEREAS, President Hall has announced his acceptance of the presidency at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, New York, and sadly, his dynamic tenure at APSU will come to an end this spring; and

WHEREAS, under President Hall's leadership, APSU has undergone significant transformation through enrollment growth, performance, and facilities; APSU is now the fastest growing university in the State, as enrollment increased sixteen percent during the first five years of his presidency; and

WHEREAS, President Hall has been very involved in campus life and maintained his connection to students by randomly joining them for lunch and conversation; attending athletic events, concerts, lectures, and other programs; taking art classes with students; and teaching a freshmen seminar course; and

WHEREAS, President Hall is so popular among the APSU students that many ask him for a hug as they cross the stage at graduation; this kind of affection for him is commonplace at APSU; and

WHEREAS, the increase in student numbers over the years also created a need for additional faculty, and since 2007, President Hall has facilitated a net increase of sixty-two

faculty lines, which reduced the student/faculty ratio to 19:1, and thus allowed more opportunities for students to work closely with their instructors and professors and maintain the personal attention that has been a continued focus of the University under his watch; and

WHEREAS, during his illustrious tenure at APSU, President Hall led efforts to open nine new facilities, with the latest four structures opening last fall: Governors Terrace, which consists of Martha Dickerson Eriksson Hall, Governors Terrace North, and Governors Terrace South; and the Maynard Mathematics and Computer Science building; and

WHEREAS, President Hall's push to improve the APSU campus will continue well after his departure, including the construction of a new \$19 million Governors Stadium and the Trahern fine arts building expansion, which is now approved for the design phase of the project; and

WHEREAS, President Hall firmly believes that student success and completion are not just the responsibility of the university president, but of every university employee; and he adroitly modified Austin Peay's measurement of student success to focus on academic progress and graduation rates, instead of mere enrollment numbers; and

WHEREAS, possessing a vision of academic life that is both timely and clear, President Hall challenged each division to improve services, eliminate student barriers, and develop new and creative ways to meet students' needs; and

WHEREAS, President Hall played an instrumental role in APSU and its faculty and staff adapting successfully to the State's modifications to higher education funding, which placed more emphasis on retention and graduation rates; since the implementation of the new funding formula, APSU has led the state in performance, topping the charts within both the Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee systems; and

WHEREAS, President Hall's leadership to move APSU forward carried over into his vision for fundraising; he successfully led a campaign to raise nearly \$40 million in gifts and pledges during the silent phases of the University's capital campaign, including the two largest single gifts in the history of the University, one of which exceeded \$13 million; and

WHEREAS, APSU experienced a new level of national attention during the last five years, as President Hall's innovation and leadership methods attracted the attention of major publications. Projects such as Degree Compass, course redesign, and college completion have been recognized by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The New York Times*, *Public Purpose*, and *The Economist*; Bill Gates mentioned APSU in a speech about college innovation, and President Obama praised APSU's efforts in the creation of Degree Compass in his speeches about college affordability; and

WHEREAS, a report titled *Seven Practices of Enlightened Leadership in Higher Education: A Case Study of Austin Peay State*, prepared by the non-profit organization Public Agenda, praised APSU as an "outlier" in the power of its administrative leadership; and

WHEREAS, President Tim Hall received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy, summa cum laude, from the University of Houston in 1978; he then performed two years of graduate work in the religious studies department at Rice University in Houston before attending law school and receiving his juris doctorate, cum laude, from the University of Texas Law School in 1983; and

WHEREAS, after law school, he joined the firm of Hughes and Luce in Austin, where he practiced trial law for five years; and

WHEREAS, President Hall subsequently served as a law professor and later as associate vice chancellor of academic affairs at the University of Mississippi from 1989-2007; in 2005, he was asked to assume additional responsibilities as executive director of a campaign to raise \$60 million for a new law school facility at the University of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, his many professional and personal achievements aside, Tim Hall is most grateful for the love, companionship, and support he receives from his wife of thirty-seven years, Lee Nicholson Hall, and their children, Ben and Amy, both of whom earned degrees from APSU in 2013; Ben earned a Master of Arts with a major in English in May, and Amy earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in Art and a concentration in Visual Communication in December; and

WHEREAS, President Hall's departure will create a tremendous void on the APSU campus, but the University is much better for having enjoyed his visionary leadership; he is

leaving the institution transformed and better prepared, not simply because of his leadership, but also through his true compassion for the APSU student body he has so faithfully served; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Tim Hall on his exemplary tenure as President of Austin Peay State University, commend his brilliant career in higher education and his innovative approach to leadership at APSU, and wish President Hall all the best as he assumes the presidency of Mercy College.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.